

Water Legacy

Heritage for the Future

June 25, 2005

Once again our *Water Legacy – Heritage for the Future* celebration was a huge success! The room, generously donated by the Michael Servetus Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, was transformed into a garden wonderland, with lighted trees and pots overflowing with flowers. We had more environmental exhibitors than ever as Addy Lab, Clark Conservation District, Clark County Health Department, Clark County Clean Water Commission, Clark County/WSU-Vancouver Watershed Stewards, EPA, Fish First, Friends of the East Fork, Friends of Trees, MSUUF Green Sanctuary, Master Composter/Recyclers, Nuclear Waste Legacy, The Sierra Club, Washington Conservation Voters, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife all had tables. We thank them all for joining us as well as for their continued generous contribution to our community as dedicated environmental stewards.

Everyone had a lot of fun, made some great contacts, enjoyed hot dogs with all the fixings, and listened to the dynamic sounds of Eric Parril's banjo, Fred Schulz's fiddle, Bluegrass from the Puddletown Ramblers, Ward Stroud's Native American flute, and The Original Snakeboy's Deep South Blues. Tanya Nichols charmed us all with her magnificent sword dance. And when Santa Claus stopped by, the magic continued as everyone eagerly waited to have their picture taken with him.



Water Legacy June 25, 2005: Burnt Bridge Creek Blessing

A warm note of thanks to Taylor Aalvik of the Cowlitz Tribe, our own Thom McConathy, and to Ward Stroud for the special blessing celebration of Burnt Bridge Creek. Everyone gathered down at the creek where we stood under a canopy of willow branches. Taylor said that this was a very emotional time as he stood on the banks of the creek just north of the recently discovered burial ground of his native ancestors at Fort Vancouver. He said that although no one wants to stand in the way of progress, it is important to

find balance between growth and the environment and to respect our dwindling natural resources. Acknowledging the words of Taylor, his brother from another tribe, Ward performed a piece of music that he described as being recently acknowledged by Indian Nations as their official song of the heart. Saying it was very inspiring to be a part of this blessing ceremony of our water, Ward emphasized how it is vitally important to support groups like the Rosemere Neighborhood Association and all those present who are devoted to environmental protection and to keep the work going. As Ward's beautiful flute music floated on the air, we could see the sunlight reflecting off the water.



Thom McConathy



Taylor Aalvik



Ward Stroud

Thom closed the blessing, reminding us of the history and legacy of the water and its importance to our lives. He explained that although many different faiths have rituals and ceremonies involving the water, we don't really bless the water; the water blesses us.